

▼ Gay Pride Month ▼



Audre Lorde

“Liberation is not the private province of any one particular group”

Audre Lorde was born in 1934 in New York to parents of West Indian heritage. She passed away in 1992, a victim of breast cancer. Her battle with the disease, which was chronicled in works like The Cancer Journals, was just one of many struggles she had to deal with in life. Audre Lorde was a black homosexual female in a world dominated by white heterosexual males. She fought for justice on each of these minority fronts. Her writings protest against the swallowing of black American culture by an indifferent white population, against the perpetuation of sex discrimination, and against the neglect of the movement for gay rights. Her poetry, however, is not entirely political in content. It is extremely romantic in nature and is described by Joan Martin as ringing with, "passion, sincerity, perception, and depth of feeling."

Not only was Audre Lorde a writer and an activist but she was an educator. She held numerous teaching positions and toured the world as a lecturer. She formed coalitions between Afro-German and Afro-Dutch women, founded a sisterhood in South Africa, began Women of Color Press, and established the St. Croix Women's Coalition. She was living in St. Croix at the time of her death. Perhaps the most fitting summary of her life and work can be found in a Boston Globe tribute by Renee Graham: "She took her frailties and misfortunes, her strengths and passions, and forged them into something searing, sometimes startling, always stirring verse. Her words pranced with cadence, full of their own rhythms, all punctuated resolve and spirit. With words spun into light, she could weep like Billie Holiday, chuckle like Dizzy Gillespie or bark bad like John Coltrane."